

Appl. No. : 09/552,981
Filed : April 21, 2000

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-15 and 18-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable in view of the Kirson et al. reference (U.S. Patent No. 6, 114, 970), the Bush et al reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,397,186), the Applicant's admitted prior art, or some combination thereof. By this paper, the Applicant has amended Claims 1, 8 and 15 to highlight the features that the Applicant believes distinguish the art of record. Hence, reconsideration of the above-captioned application in light of the amendments and remarks contained herein is now respectfully requested.

On the summary sheet of the office action, there is an indication that the drawings have been objected to by the Examiner necessitating the filing of new drawings. However, in the text of the office action, the Examiner is indicating that the previous Examiner's objection has been withdrawn thereby leaving only the draftsman's objections. The Applicant therefore does not believe that replacement drawings are required at this time, however, if the Examiner believe that replacement drawings are needed, the Applicant will provide such drawings.

After carefully reviewing the Kirson and Bush references, the Applicant notes that neither of these references are directed towards an aftermarket product that could be installed into a vehicle and connected into an existing original equipment control system such that the aftermarket interface can then be used to control an aftermarket stereo. Specifically, after careful review of the Kirson et al. reference, it appears that there is no teaching of an interface device itself which is also an aftermarket product that is adapted to be installed within a vehicle to allow existing controls to be used in conjunction with replacement stereos. Kirson discloses using a new bus architecture system, the intelligent transportation system (ITS) bus architecture, in conjunction with an existing OEM bus and then interposing a gateway controller therebetween. The ITS bus is defined as an industry-wide standard (*See*, column 2, line 24) and appears to be used to allow for more elaborate controlling of multiple devices in conjunction with existing vehicle control system architecture. As such, this would suggest that the ITS bus architecture is an existing feature of the system disclosed in the Kirson reference. Consequently, there is no suggestion or teaching of a separate interface device which is an aftermarket product in and of itself to be used in conjunction with existing controls and voice recognition functionality and other aftermarket products in the manner claimed by the Applicant.

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With respect to the Bush reference, Bush also does not disclose an aftermarket product that can be used with existing hard-wired controls of a vehicle such that both hard-wired controls or voice activated controls can be used to control the operation of the stereo. Hence, while Bush discloses the concept of a remote control transmitter that can be used to generate signals to control existing remote control devices, there is no teaching in Bush of an interface that incorporates the ability to control an aftermarket stereo with either the existing controls in the vehicle or a subsequently added voice activated functionality. For these reasons, the Applicant believes that Claims 1, 8 and 15 are distinguishable over the art of record. The Applicant further believes that the remaining claims define additional patentable subject matter and are also allowable due to their respective dependencies on Claims 1, 8 and 15. The Applicant therefore believes that the above-captioned is in condition for allowance and requests the prompt allowance of the same. Should there be any impediment to the prompt allowance of this application that could be resolved by a telephone conference, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned at the number shown below.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: 7/12/03

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